01359

1975/04/02

Pick SP

SECRET

020217Z APR 75
FM CINCPAC HONOLULU HAWAII
TO JCS/CJCS WASHINGTON DC
INFO JCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
AMEMB SAIGON VS
USDAO SAIGON VS
AMEMB PHNOM PENH CB
BT
SECRET/CINCPAC SENDS - DELIVER IMMEDIATELY
TELECON ADM GAYLER, CINCPAC/LT GEN PAULEY, JCS OF 1 APR 75
EVACUATION CONSIDERATIONS SOUTH VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA
1. (S) VIETNAM, NVN FORCES AND INTERNAL DISRUPTION ROLLING UP COASTAL PROVINCES AND PORTS IN RAPID SUCCESSION. FOR EXAMPLE CA RAN BAY HAVE ONLY 1-3 DAYS LEFT. NVN ARMS MAY NOT PAUSE TO REGROUP BUT CONTINUE MOMENTUM OF ATTACK BOTH DOWN COASTAL PROVINCE AND AGAINST SAIGON ITSELF. SAIGON MAY FAIRLY SOON BE INTERDICTED FROM SEA AND TAN SON NHUT AIRPORT MAY COME UNDER FIRE. ORGANIC FLAC ACCOMPANIES THE NVN FORCES AND ALL FLIGHT ROUTES BECOME INCREASINGLY DANGEROUS. AN INFILTRATED SA7 THREAT NEAR SAIGON IS POSSIBLE. SAIGON CITY MAY SOON BECOME UNSTABLE, HOSTILITY TO AMERICANS ARISE. TRAFFIC BECOME IMPASSABLE AND AIRPORT UNUSABLE BECAUSE OF CROWDS, IN THE PATTERN OF DA NANG AND NHA TRANG. OF COURSE, NONE OF THESE THINGS MAY HAPPEN, BUT IT IS NECESSARY AND PRUDENT TO PROVIDE FOR THEM.

THE CONSIDERED CONCENSUS OF MY INTELLIGENCE IS THAT SAIGON CA HOLD ONLY A FEW WEEKS (IF NVN PAUSES AND DEFENSE IS ORGANIZED) TO A FEW DAYS (IF NVN KEEPS COMING AND MORALE COLLAPSES). BARRING MASSIVE AMERICAN INTERVENTION OR A DELIBERATE NVN PAUSE IT IS GOI

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4
MR 91-18, #27, CINCPAC ltr. 7/31/91
By KBH NARA, Date 10/21/91

TO GO.

ALONG THE COAST WE HAVE DESIGNATED EVACUATION PORTS AND (TEMPORARY) SAFE HAVENS.

A MORE FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION ARISES: IS FURTHER DISTRIBUTION OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES FROM PLACE TO PLACE, WITHOUT PERMANENT SAFE HAVEN, EITHER PRACTICABLE OR IN THEIR OWN INTERESTS WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THOSE VIETNAMESE WE INTEND TO MOVE OUT OF COUNTRY IT IS NOT CLEAR WE WILL BE DOING THEM ANY GOOD.

I AM UNDERTAKING IMMEDIATE CONTINGENCY PLANNING FOR THE EVACUATION OF SAIGON. CONCEPTUALLY IT RESEMBLES EAGLE PULL: OPTI 1 - AN UNOPPOSED FIXED WING CIVILIAN AIRLIFT, OPTION II - MILITARY AIRLIFT AND OPTION III - HELICOPTER AIRLIFT WITH LOCAL AND ROUTE OPPOSITION. GROUND SECURITY WILL BE DIFFICULT: WILL ESTIMATE FORCE REQUIRED ASAP. LEGAL PROBLEMS MAY BE INVOLVED. THE OPERATION WILL BE A MUCH BIGGER PROBLEM THAN PHNOM PENH. CONSIDER ING LIFT BY WATER AS POSSIBILITY BUT LOOKS IMPRACTICAL BECAUSE OF COASTAL AND RIVER INSECURITY. WILL FORWARD OUTLINE PLANNING TO YOU ASAP.

IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE SIZE THE PROBLEM NOW. IN ADDITION TO AMERICANS WE PRESUMABLY HAVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR CERTAIN THIRD COUNTRY PEOPLE AND FOR A NUMBER OF VIETNAMESE, INCLUDING DEPENDENT AMERICAN EMPLOYEES, AND THEIR FAMILIES. I AM AWARE OF RELUCTANCE TO LIFT ANY OTHER VIETNAMESE, BUT WE HAVE GOT TO BE BOTH REALISTIC AND HUMANE AND CONSIDER THAT WE WILL UNQUESTIONABLY WANT TO LIFT SOME IF THERE IS NO OTHER WAY TO GET OUT. AND WE HAVE MORAL COMMITMENTS.

SEE NO PROBLEM IN CAPACITY MILITARY FIXED WING AIRLIFT, AGAIN DEPENDENT ON AVAILABILITY OF AIRPORT AND FLIGHT SAFETY. HELO LIFT MAY STRAIN OUR RESOURCES AND I URGE THE DEPLOYMENT OF ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATE HELOS BY AIRLIFT FROM CONUS AND KOREA AND OKINAWA. SPECIFICS ASAP.

FIXED WING LIFT HAS A CHOICE OF DESTINATIONS WHICH I ASSUME STATE IS WORKING. HELO LIFT CAN ONLY LAND ON DECKS AT SEA, CONSIDERING RANGE AND SECURITY. THEREFORE REQUEST HOLDING ALL CARRIERS IN AREA. SPECIFICS ASAP.

2. (S) CAMBODIA. CAMBODIA IS SLIDING FAST. NEAK LUONG HAS FALLEN, KC MAY HAVE ADVANCED TO WITHIN A FEW KILOMETERS OF THE AIRPORT, AND KC MAY WELL DEPLOY AN ADDITONAL FIVE OR SIX THOUSAND TROOPS AGAINST THE CAPITAL. LON NOL'S DEPARTURE IS PROBABLY TOO L TO ENERGIZE THE MILITARY OR THE POPULATION. IN ANY CASE, THE PROSPECT OF SOON BEING OUT OF AMMO WILL FINISH EFFECTIVE MILITARY RESISTANCE.

WELCOME DECISION TO THIN OUT. IMPERATIVE THIS INCLUDE

Declassified
Photocopy from Gerald R. Ford Library

CAMBODIANS AND THIRD COUNTRY NATIONALS TO WHOM WE HAVE COMMITMENTS. MUST NOT BE TOO SLOW OR TOO LATE. WHATEVER WE CALL IT, EAGLE PULL OPTION 1 SHOULD START NOW, FOR TWO REASONS: THE AIRPORT MAY GO ANY TIME, AND WE MAY URGENTLY NEED EAGLE PULL ASSETS IN SVN.

TO RECAP:

A. RECOMMEND IMMEDIATE DECISION WHETHER TO CONTINUE RELOCATING VN REFUGEES NOT SLATED TO LEAVE COUNTRY.

B. URGENTLY NEED TO SIZE OUR RESPONSIBILITIES.

C. RECOMMEND IMMEDIATE EVACUATION ALL AMERICANS AND ALL OTHERS WE INTEND TO LEAVE COUNTRY EXCEPT FOR SAIGON AREA. FOR SAIGON RECOMMEND MASSIVE THINOUT ASAP.

D. RECOMMEND EAGLE PULL OPTION I OR EQUIVALENT FOR CAMBODIA NOW.

E. URGENTLY PLANNING EVACUATION CONTINGENCIES SAIGON.

F. RECOMMEND DEPLOYING ADDITIONAL ASSETS ESPECIALLY HELOS AND CARRIER DECKS, NOW.

G. SUGGEST THIS MESSAGE BE PASSED TO STATE.

3. (C) REGRET UNABLE COORDINATE WITH WEYAND BEFORE SENDING BUT WILL DISCUSS SUBSTANCE WITH HIM ASAP.

GDS-3

BT

Declassified
Photocopy from Gerald R. Ford Library